

Notes from the

Migratory Game Bird Committee (MGBC) Meeting – February 9, 2017

Room 513 – GEF II building, Madison, and Skype/Conference call

1:00 p.m. – Start of meeting

Participants: Jason Fleener, Eddie Shea, Bill Hirt, Chip Lovell, Brian Glenzinski, Jim Holzwart, Tyler Strelow, Peter David, Pete Engman, Don Kirby, Brenda Kelly

Announcements

Taylor Finger has accepted the Migratory Game Bird Ecologist position with the DNR and will be taking a more active role with the committee. Greg Egan joins the committee, representing the Hunter's Rights Coalition. Greg is a waterfowl hunter from the La Crosse area and the committee looks forward to Greg bringing his perspectives to the committee.

Jason Fleener

Jason updated the committee regarding the shift of pheasant stamp funds – and likely shift of turkey stamp funds – to district allocations. While those respective committees were in favor of changing to district allocations, the MGBC would like to see the current, committee review system of awarding funds continue, with some modest changes to streamline the process. **More discussion on this below**

To accommodate the committee's desire for project review, Jason spoke with the policy team and pitched the idea of having potential waterfowl stamp applicants submit a short project description to their District Supervisor (DS), who, referring to a short guideline document prepared and presented by the MGBC, would decide if the project was worth pursuing. If the project was worth pursuing, the DS would request a full application be drafted and submitted to the MGBC for funding consideration.

- The committee discussed if the DS should cap the number of proposals that advance to a full application, but argued this could eliminate proposals on the front-end that might otherwise be selected for funding.
- Brian Glenzinski reminded the committee about a prior discussion to have DS's rank projects invited for funding consideration.

The committee discussed options for the process of receiving projects for funding consideration. The following is the draft process:

- After approving projects for funding consideration and receiving applications, DSs may consider the input from area supervisors and will rank projects within their district (1 - x).
- DSs will provide a ranked list of projects and may provide brief comments on their ranking order. The DSs will convey their rankings and justification to the respective district MGBC Wildlife representatives.

- District representatives will provide the ranked lists and DS's justification to the full committee during the application review process
- The committee will continue to review applications as usual prior to the recommendation meeting
- Committee will quickly go through top ranked projects, make funding determinations, and then spend more time considering lower tier projects for funding. The project proposals will be listed in order from highest to lowest according to the mean ratings by the committee, with an additional column of the district rankings for perspective (e.g. WCD 3/5).

The committee discussed the idea of allocating a portion of waterfowl stamp funds off the top to help fund LTE salary, focusing on areas where LTEs depend on stamp funds for employment. While it would ensure consistent funding for LTE positions and help with work-planning, the committee was concerned that too much could be taken off the top, which could create an imbalance of L-line to S-line. The committee preferred to continue the current allocation process (project-based approval) but agreed to revisit the issue if necessary.

Topic of DS Screening Process

The committee agreed that the DSs should be aware of roughly how much money will be available for projects each biennium to guide them in determining if a proposal should move toward a full application. The committee also agreed that a guidance document should be provided to DSs that will explain the types of projects the committee is most interested in funding, which should aid the DSs in the screening process.

Timeline for Waterfowl Stamp Funding (dates are approximate)

- February 28, 2017. Announcement are made to externals for the open application period, and internal pre-proposal period is announced through the Wildlife districts
- March ?, 2017 District supervisors communicate with local staff if their pre-proposals should advance to a full application
- April 12, 2017. Applications for projects (internal and external) under consideration for funding are due to Eddie Shea. *This date was agreed to by the committee*
- April 19 - May 1, 2017. Committee members will receive package containing applications for review
- May 24, 2017. Committee meets to determine project recommendations for funding. Exact date will be determined through a Doodle poll.
- June 13, 2017. Jason presents recommendations to the Policy Team for final approval.
- June 14 – 30, 2017. All applicants are notified of their funding status and planning begins to implement projects during the next biennium.

From previous committee interest in visiting project sites, Jason suggested a possible field visit to Navarino Wildlife Area. A meeting combined with a field visit will be determined based on the number of items on the agenda.

Guidance Document Review

- Two guidance documents will be created, one for Canada projects, and one for all other projects.
- The committee desires color maps included with project applications, or at least have a color map made available as the map is a useful to determine project importance on the landscape. It was discussed that the application instructions request a specific map scale to 1) obtain the desired landscape view of projects and 2) maintain consistency among projects.
- The committee will begin ranking projects on a 1-5 scale where 1 is a low score and 5 is a high score.
- Under “Funded Stamp Projects” the committee agreed to change the language that requires partners to acknowledge stamp funding in all public communications to a friendlier suggestion, with a brief explanation as to the value of mentioning stamp fund contributions.
- The committee discussed modifying the ranking of projects under section III, “Eligible Guidelines,” but decided against any changes.
- Under “Ineligible Projects...” the committee decided to change “Wood duck boxes” to “artificial nesting structures” to be more inclusive

Project Application Form Review

- The committee discussed adding a question requesting information on past or long-term funding of a project, but decided against it for now, with future revisiting.
- Under part 2, application information, the “Full Name of Applicant” will be changed to “Full Name of Project Contact” and the request for second contact will be removed.
- Under part 3b.
 - “Canada” will be removed since Canadian projects will have a separate proposal form.
 - “State Wildlife Areas” will be changed to “State Managed Properties”
 - Only project acreage will be requested
 - Projects will no longer request legal description, instead requesting a lat/long coordinate point.
- Part 3d. #3, SGCN will be reduced from listing up to ten to listing a maximum of three.
- Part 7, Applicant spaces to list partners will be reduced from 5 spaces to 3 to shorten the application.

Following discussion, Jason requested that the committee take a couple days to think about these changes, as well as any other potential changes that come to mind, and contact him as needed.

The committee adjourned at 4:10 p.m.